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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [OVIP](#) [PREL](#) [KN](#) [KS](#)
SUBJECT: DEPUTY STEINBERG'S MEETING WITH ROK NATIONAL
SECURITY ADVISOR KIM

Classified By: D-S STEINBERG FOR REASONS 1.4(b) and (d)

1.(C) Summary: Deputy Secretary Steinberg held a cordial meeting with Republic of Korea (ROK) National Security Advisor Kim Sung-hwan for to discuss bilateral relations and the Secretary's upcoming visit to Seoul. Topics discussed included inter-Korean relations, transforming the U.S.-ROK alliance, the G20 Summit in London, and prospects for passage of the Korean-U.S. Free Trade Agreement (KORUS FTA). End summary.

Great Expectations

2.(C)NSA Kim relayed that the ROKG greatly appreciates this early Asia trip by Secretary Clinton. The ROK understands the significance of the Secretary making her first overseas visit to Northeast Asia. He expressed that the Secretary is a big celebrity in the ROK and well known and thought of by the public.

13. (C) Deputy Steinberg stated that the Secretary is looking forward to her trip to Seoul. The Deputy Secretary informed Kim that the Secretary will discuss-- both publicly and privately-- the administrations policy on "smart power" and making the U.S.-ROK alliance into a global partnership.

The ROK and the new U.S. Administration

14. (C) NSA Kim mentioned that President Lee would like to visit Washington soon. Deputy Steinberg said that while these decisions are made by the White House, the State Department would support such a visit.

15. (C) Kim explained that President Lee plans to attend the G20 Summit in London in April, and hopes to meet with President Obama then. President Lee would like to make a joint statement regarding the U.S.-ROK alliance. The ROK hopes to move our alliance beyond a simple military alliance and include broader issues such as climate change and counter-terrorism. Deputy Secretary Steinberg stated that the United States is also interested in broadening our alliance, and that Secretary Clinton will help to further the relationship during her visit.

KORUS FTA

16. (C) Kim said that for the ROK the KORUS FTA is a key element of the alliance and much more than just an economic issue. The ROK believes the FTA is a pillar of the U.S.-ROK relationship and stands ready to help move it forward in the appropriate manner. Deputy Secretary Steinberg replied that the Obama Administration is pro-trade, but has concerns about the agreement. Kim said that the ROK does not want the issue to become a burden in our relationship. Kim and Steinberg

agreed that once the right U.S. officials are in place the two sides should get together for a pragmatic discussion of the way forward.

North Korea

7.(C) NSA Kim expressed that the Lee government believes in engagement with North Korea, however their approach is different from the previous two ROK administrations. He stated that there are two key differences in the current North Korea policy. First, denuclearization is a high priority for the Lee government. The North Korea nuclear situation is very important to the ROKG, and is not just an issue for the other powers to discuss. Second, the ROKG places a high level of importance on human rights in North Korea. Explaining the current state of affairs with the North, Kim said that the North always seeks to deal exclusively with the United States during the early days of a new administration. Therefore their current actions were an attempt to get the attention of the U.S. administration.

8.(S/NF) Steinberg said that the USG has an opportunity now since North Korea places such a high value on improving relations with the United States. The United States should use that to our advantage to make progress with the North and bring bilateral breakthroughs to the Six-Party Talks. Kim also said that the ROKG has asked China to deliver a message to the North to encourage them to stand down any missile or rocket launches.

Afghanistan

9.(C) Switching topics to Afghanistan, Kim informed Deputy Secretary Steinberg that the ROKG had recently conducted a fact-finding mission to Afghanistan in January. Based on the findings, the ROKG plans to provide more assistance and training in Afghanistan. The ROKG plans to set up a new site for a hospital and a training center. The ROKG also plans to contribute ambulances, motorcycles, and police trainers. Steinberg told Kim that the U.S. is planning strategy and President Obama expects to complete this planning before the upcoming NATO summit. The United States wants to focus on training and financial support for the Afghan National Army (ANA).

The London G20 Summit

10.(C) The ROKG looks forward to continuing the G20 process. Deputy Secretary Steinberg mentioned the U.S. stimulus bill and the issue of protectionism. He informed Kim that President Obama is aware of the issue of protectionism and working to address it appropriately in the stimulus package.

Intelligence Leaks and the Media

11.(S/NF) Kim apologized for the recent issues with sensitive information being released to the media. According to Kim, the first occurrence was in the Japanese media and a few hours later one individual from the ROKG was trying to show off and responded by releasing additional information to the media in Korea. The ROKG is currently investigating the matter and will deal with the individual once the matter is fully investigated. Deputy Secretary Steinberg emphasized the importance of protecting classified data from the United States. NSA Kim promised that there would be no further incidents in the ROK.

Liancourt Rocks

12.(C) After reviewing his notes, NSA Kim brought up a final issue regarding a territorial dispute with Japan over islands referred to as 'Dok-do' in the ROK. Kim explained that currently the ROK and Japan are experiencing improved

relations and that the ROK did not want to press the issue to hard on the issue.

13.(SBU) The ROK was represented at the meeting by NSA Kim, Senior Assistant Secretary Cho Hyun-dong, Senior Assistant Secretary Kim Soo-gwon, Director for North Korean Policy Ham Sang-wook, and Political Minister Kim Kyou-hyun from the ROK Embassy in Washington. The U.S. was represented by Deputy Secretary James B. Steinberg, Director of Korean Affairs Kurt Tong, and Acting D (S) Special Assistant Amy Nicodemus.
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